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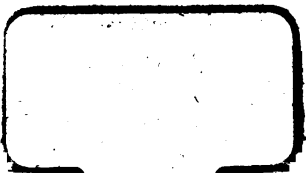
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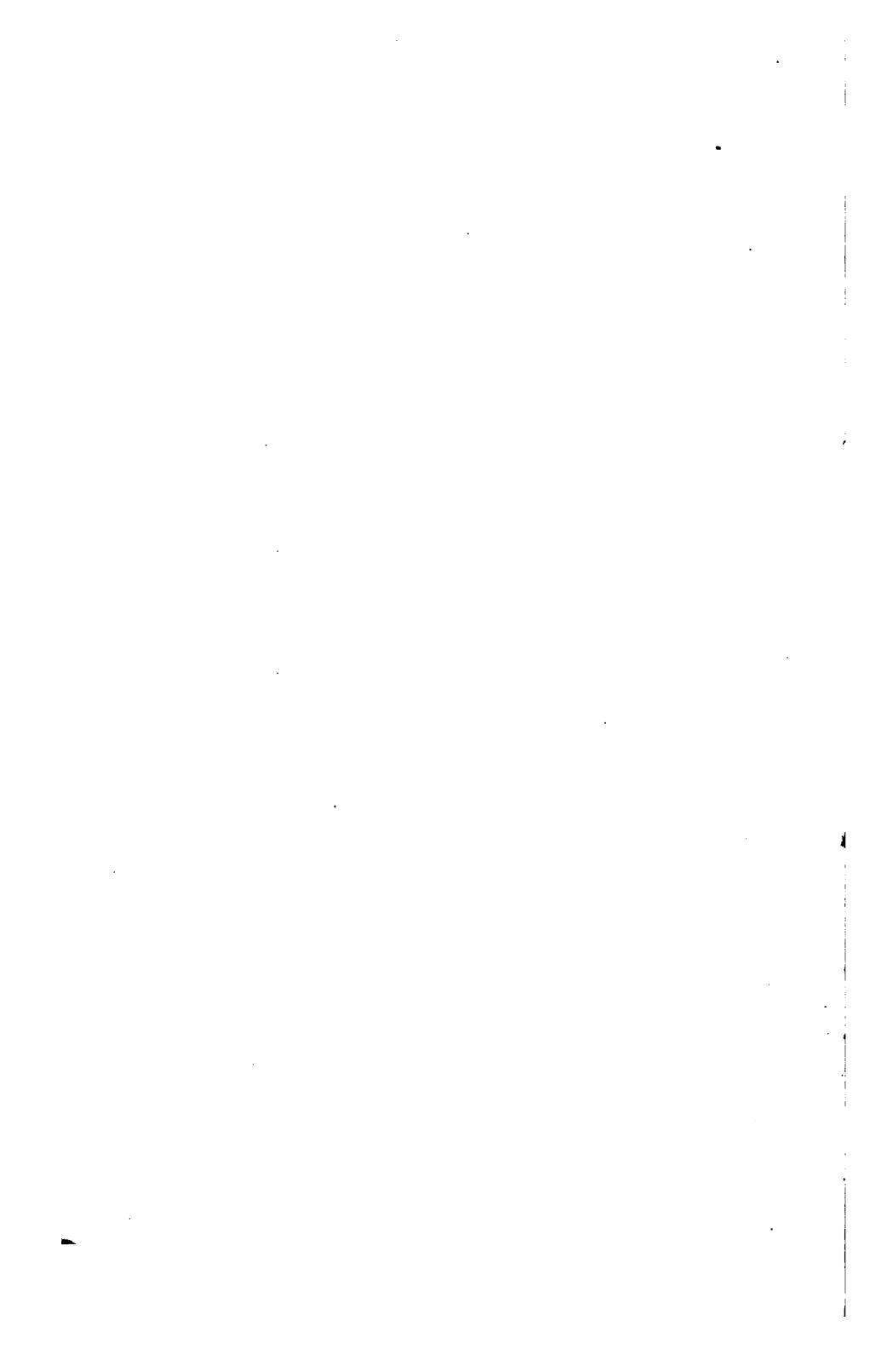
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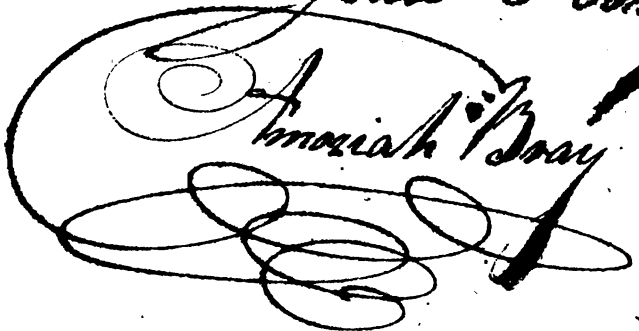
Name



Andrews JB
= Flint
AN



John C. Barry
Amosiah Barry



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Rev. Thomas W. Bray

MR. FLINT'S SERMON

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. JOSIAH B. ANDREWS.

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A
SERMON,
DELIVERED AT THE
ORDINATION
OF THE
Rev. JOSIAH B. ANDREWS,
TO THE PASTORAL CARE
OF THE
SECOND CHURCH IN
KILLINGWORTH,
APRIL 21, 1802.

By ABEL FLINT,
Pastor of the South Church in Hartford.



HARTFORD:
PRINTED BY HUDSON & GOODWIN.

1802.

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A SERMON, &c.

ACTS xxviii. 31.

Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence,——

THE apostle Paul was distinguished from the other apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the ardor of his zeal, by the abundance of his labors in the service of his great master, and by the cruel persecutions he met with from the enemies of the Christian cause. Impressed with a lively sense of gratitude to God, for interposing, in a miraculous manner, to bring him to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and of the way of salvation through him, he devoted his life to the propagation of that glorious system. To an object so momentous he sacrificed all that the world calls dear, his ease, his interest, his reputation, and in the end life itself. This illustrious child of wisdom triumphed in the midst of persecution;— he gloried that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ; and desired to spend and be spent in disseminating that religion which is in fact, and which he firmly believed to be “the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth.”

DEEPLY impressed himself with a sense of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, he wished to be made instrumental of communicating this knowledge to others; and therefore, he improved

Waller, 30 Oct.

every opportunity afforded him "to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Undaunted by the fear of persecution, unmoved by the threatenings of his enemies, undismayed by the prospect of bonds and imprisonment, which he knew awaited him, he still persevered in preaching a crucified Saviour to Jews and Gentiles.

HAVING, in the discharge of a commission entrusted to him by his great master, incurred the resentment of the Jewish rulers and people, they would have barbarously murdered him, had he not been protected by the Roman troops then stationed at Jerusalem. Being permitted to speak in his own defence, he delivered an eloquent apology for himself, stating what had been the manner of his life, and giving a history of his miraculous conversion to the Christian faith, with an account of his subsequent conduct. The Jews still persisting in their enmity, exhibited a number of charges against him before the Roman governor and insisted upon his condemnation. In consequence of this, the apostle, thinking it his duty to use all lawful means to preserve his life, claimed those privileges to which he was entitled as a Roman citizen, and appealed from the tribunal of the Roman governor in Judea, to the judgment of Cæsar. He was accordingly sent as a prisoner to Rome. Having arrived in that city, divine Providence so ordered it, that instead of being cast into a prison he was permitted to reside in his own hired house guarded by a single foldier. Here Paul "received all those who came unto him; preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence."

FROM the history of this apostle, contained in the book of Acts, and from his epistles, which form so important a part of the canon of the new testament, we learn that our text contains, in few words, the great subjects which St. Paul thought it his duty,

as a minister of Christ, to inculcate on those to whom he was sent to preach the gospel. He uniformly preached *the kingdom of God, and the things concerning Jesus Christ*. And this he every where did with *great confidence*; boldly declaring the whole counsel of God, that the blood of those souls to whom he dispensed the everlasting gospel might not be required at his hands.

As God is immutable, without any variableness or shadow of turning, the truths of his holy word will forever remain the same; and it will ever be the duty of Christian ministers to preach the same system of doctrines and precepts which was taught by the great apostle of the Gentiles; and in imitation of him to preach them "with all confidence." There is but one gospel,—but one way of salvation; and tho an angel from heaven were to preach another gospel than that preached by Paul, a solemn curse is denounced against him. How important then that the ministers of Christ preach the truth! How important that they take for their pattern those primitive teachers who were immediately inspired by the Father of lights and commissioned by him to proclaim to mankind the only way of salvation! How important that "we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord!"

THE attention of this numerous and respectable audience is requested, while I recommend to my Reverend Fathers and Brethren, and particularly to my young Brother, who is this day to be solemnly consecrated to the work of the gospel ministry, the example of the apostle Paul, as mentioned in the words of our text.

THE passage contains three leading ideas which I shall endeavor to illustrate and apply to the present occasion.

I. IT is the duty of Christian ministers to "preach the kingdom of God."

II. IT is their duty to “teach those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.”

III. IT is their duty to do this “with all confidence.”

I. IN the first place, It is the duty of Christian ministers to “preach the kingdom of God.”

“THE kingdom of God,” or “the kingdom of heaven,” is a phrase which frequently occurs in the holy scriptures, and it is used in different senses. Sometimes it denotes God’s universal kingdom, or that dominion which he exercises over all the works of his hands—as—that expression of the Psalmist, “They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.” By the kingdom of God is sometimes meant a principle of true religion seated in the heart;—as, “The kingdom of God is not in word but in power.” “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy ghost.” “The kingdom of God is within you.”—Sometimes the phrase denotes the Christian dispensation, in distinction from the Jewish—as—where John the Baptist says—“Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” And sometimes, “the kingdom of God,” means that state of glory and blessedness into which the righteous will be admitted in a future state of existence; as in our Saviour’s discourse with Nicodemus,—“Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

As understood in all these senses, the kingdom of God is to be preached.—Under this general idea are comprised many particulars, some of which will be briefly mentioned.

A TRUE knowledge of God is the foundation of all religious truth. If on this subject the ideas of men are essentially wrong, their whole system of doctrines will be erroneous. Faithful ministers will, therefore, endeavor often to delineate the true character and perfections of the ever blessed God, as these are discovered in the works of creation, in the dispensations of providence, and particularly in that revelation which God hath made of himself; together with the mode of the divine existence in a trinity of persons, so far as this mysterious subject is opened to the comprehension of men in the holy scriptures.—They will describe the several relations which man stands in to God, as his creator, preserver and judge, with the various duties resulting from those relations. They will inculcate the doctrine of God's universal and particular providence, in fulfilment of his eternal decrees, foreordaining whatsoever comes to pass; and that the divine being will over-rule all things to the advancement of his own glory, and the greatest good of his intelligent universe.—They will describe that holy, just and good law, which is a transcript of the moral perfections of its divine author, and which all rational beings are under infinite obligations always to obey; with the perfectly reasonable penalty annexed to the violation of this law; and the certainty of this penalty's being inflicted on finally impenitent transgressors. This will lead them often to speak of the general resurrection, of the day of judgment and that future state of retribution which is to succeed. They will delineate the character of the true subjects of God's spiritual kingdom in this world, and the glories of the heavenly kingdom, so far as they are unveiled in the sacred volume. They will consequently be often led to describe true religion as consisting in holy love,—supreme love to God, and universal benevolence to man;—acted out in a life of uniform obedience to the divine precepts.

In a word, preaching the kingdom of God denotes preaching that system of religion which God hath revealed. The bible is the great standard of truth and duty. From that source are to be derived our articles of faith and rules of practice. To the law and to the testimony must we ever appeal for the truth of our religious sentiments ; and not to the dictates of reason corrupted by passion and biassed by prejudice.

THOSE therefore who instruct their hearers only in what is called the religion of nature, and in the systems of morality taught by uninspired men ;—who omit, or but slightly and superficially discuss the peculiar truths of divine revelation, and who do not enjoin those graces of the heart and those moral virtues which distinguish the Christian religion from all others, do not imitate the apostle Paul, and are not faithful stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

BUT referring to the next general head of discourse several particulars which it might seem proper to introduce under this head, I pass on to observe,

II. It is the duty of Christian ministers to “ teach those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.”

To preach Christ is to have a general reference to him in all religious subjects ; in conformity with the scope of divine revelation, and with the preaching of the primitive apostles.—The work of redemption is the most glorious of all God’s works ; indeed the others are but appendages of this. The true character of God is seen only as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ ; and those truths and doctrines which have been already mentioned cannot be rightly understood and explained without reference to Christ. “ We preach Christ crucified,” says St. Paul, “ to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness ; but to them that are called, both Jews and

Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." In Christ as a central point, all the lines of evangelical truth meet and are united. Suffer me, to ask your attention to a quotation from an elegant writer on this subject.

"JESUS Christ, far superior to all human glory, was known and celebrated long before he came into the world. His magnificence is of all ages. The foundations of his religion were laid with those of the world ; and tho he did not appear on earth till four thousand years after the creation, yet his history begins with that of the world. He was first preached in Paradise ; the subject was continued down to Moses ; and revealed still more frequently and more clearly during the reign of the law and the prophets. For four thousand years Jesus Christ was the object of the promises of heaven, and the desires of the earth ; he was typified by righteous men and by the worship of the law ; he was proclaimed by a long train of prophets, and his way prepared by the whole chain of political events.

"JESUS, above all, Jesus crucified, throws the brightest light upon the old testament. Without him what can we comprehend in the multitude of ceremonies and sacrifices of the law ? What images without him do the lives of the patriarchs offer ? What can we find in the prophecies but impenetrable enigmas ? The law would be a sealed book, and Judaism a confused heap of precepts and ceremonies, piled up without meaning. On the contrary, how beautiful is the history of the people of God and all their worship when the cross is the key !—What order !—What design !—What plan !—What an admirable economy !—It is one whole, the different parts of which relate to the same end. It is an edifice which God himself

“founded, and insensibly raised, with a design of placing upon the top the cross of his Son. It is a long allegory which divine wisdom contrived and conducted during many ages, and of which, at length, the cross has given the true sense.”

So full are the holy scriptures of Jesus Christ, and so important is it that his ministers have an ultimate reference to him in all their discourses. Having made these general remarks respecting preaching Christ, I proceed to mention several particulars concerning him which faithful ministers of the gospel will inculcate.

THEY will insist upon the original dignity and glory of his nature, as one with the Father in every adorable attribute of divinity ; as the second person in the holy trinity ; and as mediator uniting in himself the divine and human natures, being God and man in two distinct natures and one person. They will mention the various circumstances of his incarnation, his birth, life, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension ; together with the offices which as mediator he sustained. And they will explain all those doctrines which relate to the way of salvation through him.

WERE I at this time to go into a particular detail of all the Christian doctrines, and attempt to illustrate and prove them, I should far exceed the proper limits of a single discourse, I shall therefore only mention a few leading fundamental doctrines.

1. IN the first place, the universal and total depravity of mankind. The whole system of Christianity is evidently grounded on this idea, that mankind are in a fallen, degraded, depraved state ; to recover an elect number of whom from which was the design of the mission of Christ. The more deeply we feel our depravity, the greater sense we have of our exceeding sinfulness, and the conse-

quent misery to which we are exposed; the higher will our ideas rise of the importance and worth of the Christian salvation. While those who do not believe mankind to be totally depraved, can never thoroughly understand nor duly appreciate the way of redemption through Christ. "In such as have never felt their sins as any incumbrance, it would be mere affectation to pretend to very exalted conceptions of the value and acceptableness of the proffered deliverance."

2. ANOTHER essential doctrine of the gospel, which faithful ministers will preach, is, that Christ by his sufferings and death expiated the sins of the world; that he suffered and died not as a martyr to the truth, but to make a vicarious atonement for sin; and that this atonement consisted not in obedience to the divine law but in suffering its penalty in the sinner's stead.

IN the death of Christ there was an infinite value and merit. It afforded a display of the moral perfections of God, and discovered the evil nature and consequences of sin more strikingly than if the whole human race had been left to suffer the penalty of God's righteous law. This is the uniform language of the new testament, in which the doctrine of the cross is represented as the grand peculiarity of Christianity. This doctrine is described as being not merely an important branch of the gospel but the gospel itself; and it is represented as so essential that the final salvation of the Corinthians was declared by the apostle to be suspended upon their adherence to it.

THOSE who deny or explain away the doctrine of human depravity, and those who, from inattention to the subject, or from not examining themselves, have faint ideas of their sinful and miserable condition, see no necessity of such an atonement, and therefore do not really believe the doctrine as ex-

plained in the holy scriptures. The consequence is, their whole system of sentiments as regards salvation by Christ is erroneous. To counteract such errors and inculcate the truth, the idea that Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, purchased salvation for sinners, and that salvation is in no other way to be obtained, should be often held up to view.

3. AGAIN, the necessity of divine influences to renew and sanctify the heart, is another essential doctrine of the gospel. This necessity arises from the depravity of the human heart, which is so great that if left to himself man never would become holy. A great variety of expressions are used in the scriptures on this subject, and the idea inculcated by them is, that a moral change must take place in man to fit him for the happiness purchased by the death of Christ; and that this change is effected not by any power in man, but by the operation of the holy spirit of God; who, in this respect, acts as a sovereign, having mercy on whom he will have mercy.

CHRIST, by his death, has expiated sin; he has satisfied the law of God, and made it consistent with the honor of the divine government to pardon the sinner. But notwithstanding this, no one of the human race could be happy were not God, in his sovereign mercy, to change the heart, and thus fit the sinner to receive a pardon and to enjoy happiness, which can result only from the exercise of a holy temper.

THE different parts of the gospel scheme harmonize with each other. Christianity views man as a sinful and as a guilty being. As sinful it holds forth the idea of divine influences to renew him and make him holy; as guilty it directs him to a Saviour who has died for him, and suffered the penalty of sin on his account. Thus is the gospel, what the word itself imports, a message of glad tidings.

THE doctrines which have been mentioned as fundamental and essential to the Christian scheme, may be considered as comprising the whole system. In discussing these points, faithful ministers will bring up to view the various ideas necessarily connected with them. They will describe the nature of sin and wherein the depravity of the heart consists. They will often speak of the various blessings purchased by Christ, and particularly describe that faith by which believers are united to Christ, and made to participate of the blessings purchased by him, and that repentance towards God which is said to be un-to life. They will dwell much upon experimental religion, describing the progress of the divine operation in awakening, convincing and converting the sinner, and carrying on a progressive work of sanctification in those who are ordained to eternal life. This will lead them frequently to explain and inculcate the various graces of the Christian life ; to hold up to view the character and privileges of believers, and thus to lead them to self examination, that they may not deceive themselves with a false hope.

THEY will also exhort their hearers to the practice of every moral virtue ; and enforce the idea that the law of God, tho no longer a covenant of works, is still binding as a rule of life ; and that any pretensions to faith without sincere repentance for sin, real holiness in the heart, and an external conformity to the moral precepts of the scriptures, are fallacious.

TIME will not permit me to go into a further detail of the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion. I have endeavored briefly to hold up to view that system of truths which appears to me to be contained in the word of God, and which therefore I think it the duty of Christian ministers to explain and inculcate. I may have omitted some things which many of my hearers may deem essential and important truths ; and I may have noticed others which may

be thought less important. All religious truth must be examined by the word of God. What will not bear that test must be given up. To the volume of divine revelation let a candid appeal be made.

ON the general subject of preaching Christ, I would further observe, that faithful ministers will make the advancement of his kingdom and the salvation of men the great aim of their preaching. "We preach not ourselves," says our apostle, "but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for his sake." All selfish, private considerations must be sacrificed, to the promotion of that glorious cause for which the blessed redeemer quitted the bosom of his father, suffered, bled and died. The ministers of Christ must not seek their own glory, but the glory of him who sent them. "The glory of God, and the salvation of man are the great and good ends of the pastoral office; and he who loseth sight of these, may acquire the reputation of a learned, an ingenious, or an eloquent orator, but cannot be stiled a preacher of Christ."

FINALLY, my brethren, to recur back to an idea mentioned in a preceding part of this discourse, those ministers who take the apostle Paul for an example, will have a continual reference to Christ in all their preaching. In every age thus to preach Christ hath been the means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. It was the observation of a judicious and pious writer on this subject, "That where a great and universal neglect of preaching Christ hath prevailed in a Christian nation, it hath given a fatal occasion to the growth of infidelity: for when people have heard the sermons of their ministers for many years together, and find little of Christ in them, they have taken it into their heads that men may be very good, and go safe to heaven without Christianity; and therefore though they dwell in a land where the gospel is professed, they

imagine there is no need they should be Christians. To which I may add, that it is no less observable on the other hand, that wherever there has been any revival of religion, it has uniformly been introduced and carried on, through the blessing of God, by preaching the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. These, and these alone, have been, and ever will be, the wisdom and power of God unto salvation."

A FEW remarks will be made upon the third general idea suggested in our text :

III. IT is the duty of Christian ministers to preach the kingdom of God and to teach the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "with all confidence."

THE apostle Paul, tho a prisoner in Rome, and sent there on account of his preaching the truth, boldly persisted in teaching the same system of doctrines. Feeling the force of divine truth on his own mind, he resolutely determined to inculcate this upon others, whatever might be the consequences as respected himself. No danger deterred him, no persecution restrained him, no ridicule discouraged him. He knew he had been called to preach Christ, and looking to his great master for grace to help him, he, "with all confidence," went on in the discharge of his duty.—Those who succeed him, as dispensers of the everlasting gospel, should imitate him not only in the subject of their preaching, but in their zeal and boldness in the cause of the Redeemer. Though not like him exposed to open persecution, yet many temptations will be thrown in their way to induce them to suppress truths so mortifying to the pride, so thwarting to the corrupt propensities of sinners as are many doctrines and precepts of the gospel. Against such temptations they must be on their guard, and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether people will hear or forbear. They must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the

IN a word, preaching the kingdom of God denotes preaching that system of religion which God hath revealed. The bible is the great standard of truth and duty. From that source are to be derived our articles of faith and rules of practice. To the law and to the testimony must we ever appeal for the truth of our religious sentiments ; and not to the dictates of reason corrupted by passion and biased by prejudice.

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THE different parts of the gospel scheme harmonize with each other. Christianity views man as a sinful and as a guilty being. As sinful it holds forth the idea of divine influences to renew him and make him holy; as guilty it directs him to a Saviour who has died for him, and suffered the penalty of sin on his account. Thus is the gospel, what the word itself imports, a message of glad tidings.

THE doctrines which have been mentioned as fundamental and essential to the Christian scheme, may be considered as comprising the whole system. In discussing these points, faithful ministers will bring up to view the various ideas necessarily connected with them. They will describe the nature of sin and wherein the depravity of the heart consists. They will often speak of the various blessings purchased by Christ, and particularly describe that faith by which believers are united to Christ, and made to participate of the blessings purchased by him, and that repentance towards God which is said to be unto life. They will dwell much upon experimental religion, describing the progress of the divine operation in awakening, convincing and converting the sinner, and carrying on a progressive work of sanctification in those who are ordained to eternal life. This will lead them frequently to explain and inculcate the various graces of the Christian life ; to hold up to view the character and privileges of believers, and thus to lead them to self examination, that they may not deceive themselves with a false hope.

THEY will also exhort their hearers to the practice of every moral virtue ; and enforce the idea that the law of God, tho no longer a covenant of works, is still binding as a rule of life ; and that any pretensions to faith without sincere repentance for sin, real holiness in the heart, and an external conformity to the moral precepts of the scriptures, are fallacious.

TIME will not permit me to go into a further detail of the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion. I have endeavored briefly to hold up to view that system of truths which appears to me to be contained in the word of God, and which therefore I think it the duty of Christian ministers to explain and inculcate. I may have omitted some things which many of my hearers may deem essential and important truths ; and I may have noticed others which may

be thought less important. All religious truth must be examined by the word of God. What will not bear that test must be given up. To the volume of divine revelation let a candid appeal be made.

ON the general subject of preaching Christ, I would further observe, that faithful ministers will make the advancement of his kingdom and the salvation of men the great aim of their preaching. "We preach not ourselves," says our apostle, "but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for his sake." All selfish, private considerations must be sacrificed, to the promotion of that glorious cause for which the blessed redeemer quitted the bosom of his father, suffered, bled and died. The ministers of Christ must not seek their own glory, but the glory of him who sent them. "The glory of God, and the salvation of man are the great and good ends of the pastoral office; and he who loseth sight of these, may acquire the reputation of a learned, an ingenious, or an eloquent orator, but cannot be stiled a preacher of Christ."

FINALLY, my brethren, to recur back to an idea mentioned in a preceding part of this discourse, those ministers who take the apostle Paul for an example, will have a continual reference to Christ in all their preaching. In every age thus to preach Christ hath been the means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. It was the observation of a judicious and pious writer on this subject, "That where a great and universal neglect of preaching Christ hath prevailed in a Christian nation, it hath given a fatal occasion to the growth of infidelity: for when people have heard the sermons of their ministers for many years together, and find little of Christ in them, they have taken it into their heads that men may be very good, and go safe to heaven without Christianity; and therefore though they dwell in a land where the gospel is professed, they

imagine there is no need they should be Christians. To which I may add, that it is no less observable on the other hand, that wherever there has been any revival of religion, it has uniformly been introduced and carried on, through the blessing of God, by preaching the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. These, and these alone, have been, and ever will be, the wisdom and power of God unto salvation."

A FEW remarks will be made upon the third general idea suggested in our text :

III. IT is the duty of Christian ministers to preach the kingdom of God and to teach the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "with all confidence."

THE apostle Paul, tho a prisoner in Rome, and sent there on account of his preaching the truth, boldly persisted in teaching the same system of doctrines. Feeling the force of divine truth on his own mind, he resolutely determined to inculcate this upon others, whatever might be the consequences as respected himself. No danger deterred him, no persecution restrained him, no ridicule discouraged him. He knew he had been called to preach Christ, and looking to his great master for grace to help him, he, "with all confidence," went on in the discharge of his duty.—Those who succeed him, as dispensers of the everlasting gospel, should imitate him not only in the subject of their preaching, but in their zeal and boldness in the cause of the Redeemer. Though not like him exposed to open persecution, yet many temptations will be thrown in their way to induce them to suppress truths so mortifying to the pride, so thwarting to the corrupt propensities of sinners as are many doctrines and precepts of the gospel. Against such temptations they must be on their guard, and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether people will hear or forbear. They must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the

faints, and boldly and resolutely inculcate the truth, unawed by the scoffs of the libertine or the cavils of the sceptic. The cause in which they are engaged is the cause of God, and he that is for them is greater than those that are against them.

IN the discussion of points which are rather speculative than essential, or of those intricate and mysterious subjects which are not to be fully comprehended by the human understanding, a prudent care should be taken not to give needless offence. That harshness of expression and severity of recrimination, which tend to irritate the minds of men, and prejudice them against the truth, should be carefully avoided. Our blessed Saviour, when he first gave a commission to the twelve disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven, told them not only to be harmless as doves, but also to be wise as serpents. There is such a thing as ministerial prudence, which is not at all incompatible with a bold, manly and open avowal of essential truths. These truths are never to be sacrificed to gain temporary applause from men who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.—Let Christ, let the doctrines and duties of his religion be preached “with all confidence,” at the same time, in that discreet manner which shall be best calculated to win men over to the belief of the one and the practice of the other.

HAVING finished what I proposed by way of illustration of the text, I shall now proceed to apply the subject.

I. FROM that view of scripture truth which we have now taken we learn the superior excellency of the Christian religion.

WELL might St. Paul say, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; and well might he declare that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.—No other system

of religion gives such just and rational ideas of the divine character; no other so truly describes the character of man, his present condition and the connection between the present and a future state of existence;—no other teaches on what terms God can pardon sin, nor are any intimations given of such a Saviour as man needs except in that volume which, tho despised by many, contains the only knowledge which can make man wise to salvation. All the truths of the bible are important, because they relate to the happiness of our eternal existence. If we give up these truths we shall wander like blind men without a guide till our feet stumble on the dark mountains and plunge us into endless and remediless woe. “Lord Jesus, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

2. WE learn from our subject what great obligations of gratitude we are under to the Father of lights for blessing us with the light of divine revelation.

How different is our situation from that of a great part of mankind, who are still wrapped in midnight darkness with regard to religion? They know not the God who made them; they are ignorant of a Saviour and of a future state of existence: While on all these deeply interesting subjects, we have the means of acquiring information. Let us remember who hath made us to differ; let us be truly grateful to God for his goodness to us, and be careful to improve the privileges we enjoy that it may not hereafter be our condemnation that light came into the world and that we loved darkness rather than light, because our deeds were evil.

3. THE subject to which we have been attending is particularly applicable to the solemn yet joyful services of this day.

WE have assembled in the sanctuary of the Lord for the purpose of consecrating his young servant to

the work of the gospel ministry, and of ordaining him to the pastoral care of this church and society. Important is the work to which he is to be separated; arduous are its duties; yet great are the encouragements to the faithful discharge of these duties. Deeply interesting also are the transactions of this day to this people. They are to have set over them in the Lord a spiritual guide to preach to them the truths of the everlasting gospel, and administer to them in holy things. May he be made a favor of life unto life to each individual, and not of death unto death to any one.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YOU are about to be consecrated to the work of the evangelical ministry, by prayer and the imposition of the hands of the presbytery. To this work I trust you are also called of God, else these public ceremonies will be of no avail. We can give only an external commission; the real qualifications for the work must come from a power infinitely superior to man. Your duty, as regards the subjects on which you are to preach, together with the general manner of your preaching has been, tho in a very imperfect manner, set before you. Permit me again to turn your attention to it. You are to preach the religion of the bible in distinction from the systems of uninspired men. You are to preach Christ, to have a general reference to him in the discussion of all religious subjects; to inculcate the peculiar doctrines and duties of his religion; and to make the advancement of his cause your great aim. You are to proclaim the truth with all confidence, at the same time with prudence, that you may be faithful to your own soul, and the souls committed to your care. In the discharge of your office you must expect to meet with many trials and difficulties; remember that your sufficiency is not of yourself but of God, and that he hath promised his grace shall be sufficient for you. Look therefore to him; be a man of prayer; ask for wisdom from above; and as a faithful soldier of Jesus

Christ, seek directions from your great captain ; obey his orders, and exert yourself boldly in his cause. May your days be many and prosperous ; your labors successful ; your improvements conspicuous and perpetual ; your usefulness extensive ; and your reward glorious in the kingdom of your Father where they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that have turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever !

BRETHREN OF THIS CHURCH AND SOCIETY,

As it will be the duty of him who is about to be ordained you pastor, with all confidence, to preach to you the system of divine truth revealed in the holy scriptures, so it will be your duty to hear that system and to receive it in the love of it. Permit me to remind you, that the condemnation of those to whom the truth is preached, who yet will not receive it, will be deservedly greater than that of those who do not enjoy such privileges. We trust that he whom you have chosen to take the over-sight of you in the Lord, will endeavour faithfully to dispense to you the gospel of Christ. May you long rejoice in his light, and be profited and edified by his ministry. Esteem him highly in love for his work's sake ; constantly and diligently attend upon his ministry, with minds open to conviction, and with hearts disposed to receive instruction. Assist him by your prayers ; comfort him under his trials ; give him every encouragement and support in your power, and may you be each other's crown of joy and rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming !

MY HEARERS,

WHAT hath been at this time delivered may serve to teach us what kind of preaching we ought mostly to value. By many, at the present day, the great and essential truths of the gospel are too little regarded. Like the Athenians of old they require something new, something that may gratify an itching ear, and

furnish matter for a vain imagination to work upon. Would you be made wise unto salvation ? Then cordially embrace the doctrines of Christ. Be not merely nominal Christians, believing, in a vague, indistinct sense in Christianity, because it is the religion of the country in which you happen to live ; but be the real followers of a crucified Saviour. Look to him as a prophet for instruction ; look to him as a priest to make atonement for you ; look to him as a king to rule in your hearts by his spirit, and as entitled to the service of your lives. And may he be made of God to each one of us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. AMEN.

THE CHARGE,

BY THE REV. CYPRIAN STRONG,
OF CHATHAM.

DEAR SIR,

YOU being now separated to the work of the evangelical ministry, by PRAYER and the laying on of the hands of the PRESBYTERY, and ordained the Pastor of the Church of Christ in this place : And, being authorized to preach the everlasting gospel, to perishing men—to administer the ordinances of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*—to assist in ordaining Elders—to dispense discipline, and to take the lead in the Church of Christ ;—and, in a word, to perform the whole work of a gospel minister :

WE would now charge thee, before GOD and the Lord Jesus Christ—before the holy Angels and this assembly, that thou be faithful in the discharge of all the duties of your sacred office, as a minister of Jesus Christ.

PARTICULARLY, we charge thee, to “take heed unto thyself,” and keep thy soul diligently.” Look well to the state of your soul, and see thou to it, that it be adorned with all the graces of the Divine Spirit—that the love of God, of Christ and the souls of men, be the governing principle of all your conduct. Feel thy dependance on the grace of God ; and give thyself much unto prayer.—Study the sacred scriptures with great diligence and constancy ; and make them your directory in your private walks and public administrations, as well as the source of your comforts and consolations. On the one hand, be very zealous in maintaining and supporting the important truths of the gospel ; and, on the other, be careful to exercise a due degree of meekness and benevolence, towards such as oppose it. In a word, be an example to the flock of Christ ; and

exhibit that zeal and benevolence which shone so conspicuously in the conduct of our blessed Redeemer ; that others may take knowledge of you, *that you have been with Jesus.*

AGAIN : *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prayer, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. That thy profiting may appear unto all. Take heed to thy DOCTRINE.* Let it be pure, uncorrupted and expressive of the plain truths which are recorded in the gospel. Use great plainness of speech ; and avoid the enticing words of man's wisdom. Preach and explain, with great plainness, not only the gracious promises which Christ has made, for the comfort of his own people ; but enforce the awful and dreadful threatenings which he hath denounced, for the awakening of sinners.

In the administration of the ordinances of BAPTISM and the LORD'S SUPPER, see to it, that it be to such only as are the proper subjects. Making a distinction between the *holy* and *profane*, that the temple of God be not defiled.

In the exercise of thy ministerial trust, in ordaining Elders over the Churches, see to it that thou art faithful, and exercise the greatest wisdom and care. *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* Commit the ministry to such men only, as in a judgment of charity, are men of knowledge, experience, a holy life, and are the lovers of Jesus and the souls of men.

In the exercise of discipline in Christ's house, do thou manifest a most sacred impartiality ; not preferring one to another, nor lording it over God's heritage.—Be thou in all things, *an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* In doing these things, *thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*

WE, especially, charge thee, *to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made thee an overseer.* Watch over it with diligence, feed it with the sincere milk of the word ; and in all things, be thou an example to it. Exhort *the aged to be grave, sober, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience.* Young men, likewise, exhort to be *sober minded.*

DEAR BROTHER, remember that you must render a most solemn account to the Chief Bishop of souls, for the improvement you make of the ministry, which you have now received of the Lord. Prepare to meet Him with exceeding joy. The important designs of your ministry, the influence it will eventually have on the concerns of your own soul, and the consequences which will follow, respecting the souls of this flock, are worthy of your constant and most serious consideration. It will be but a little while, before the connexion between you and this people will be dissolved, by death ; and every thing prepared for a most solemn meeting at the bar of Jesus Christ.—Be thou faithful unto death. If thou keepest this charge, which we commit unto you, unrebukable unto the end ; when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may be assured, that you shall then receive a crown of glory, which shall never fade away.

Now unto Him, who is able to keep you from falling, and to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think ; unto Him be glory in the Church, by CHRIST JESUS, throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN.

 RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP, &c.

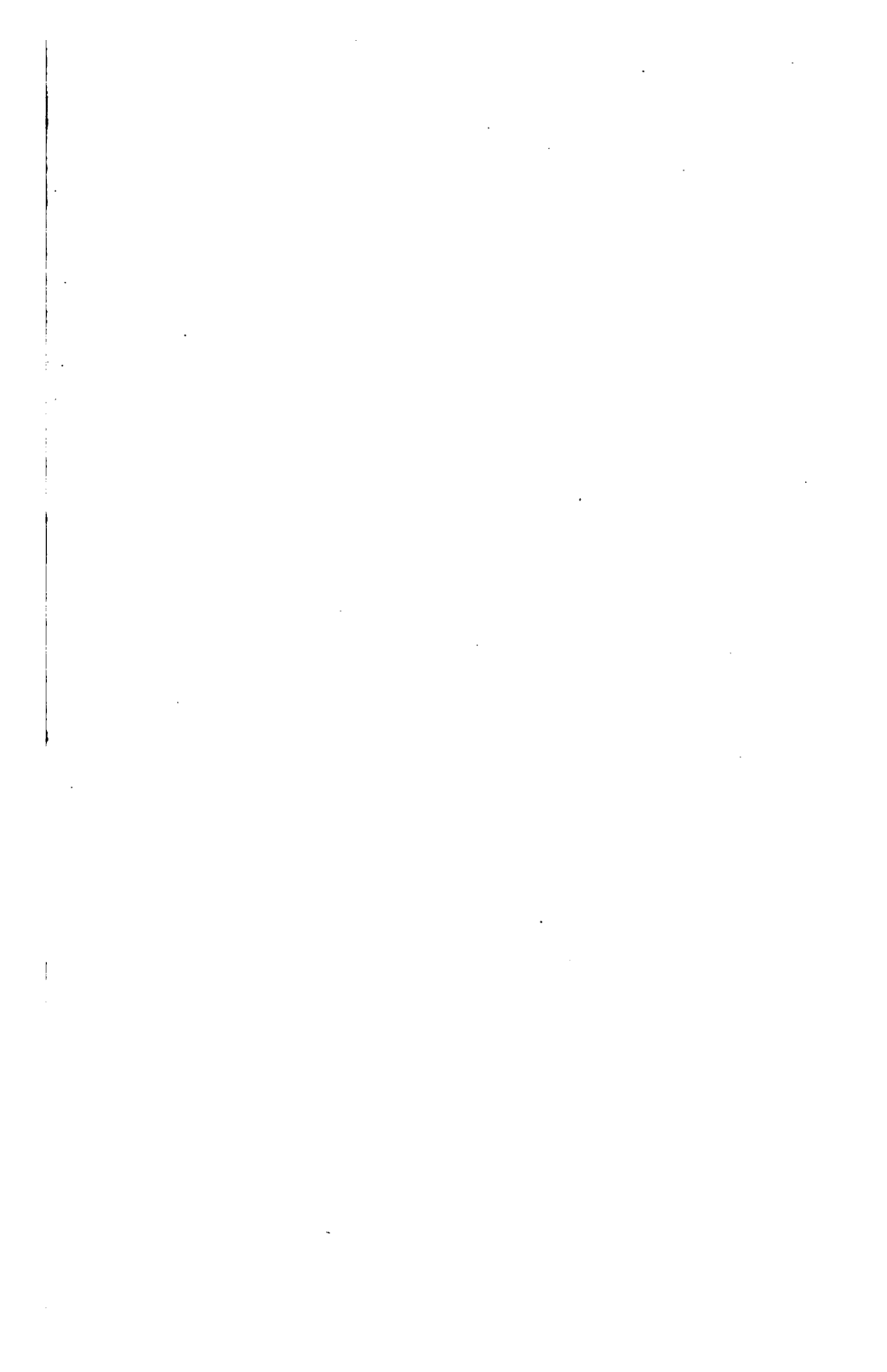
BY THE REV. DAVID SELDEN.

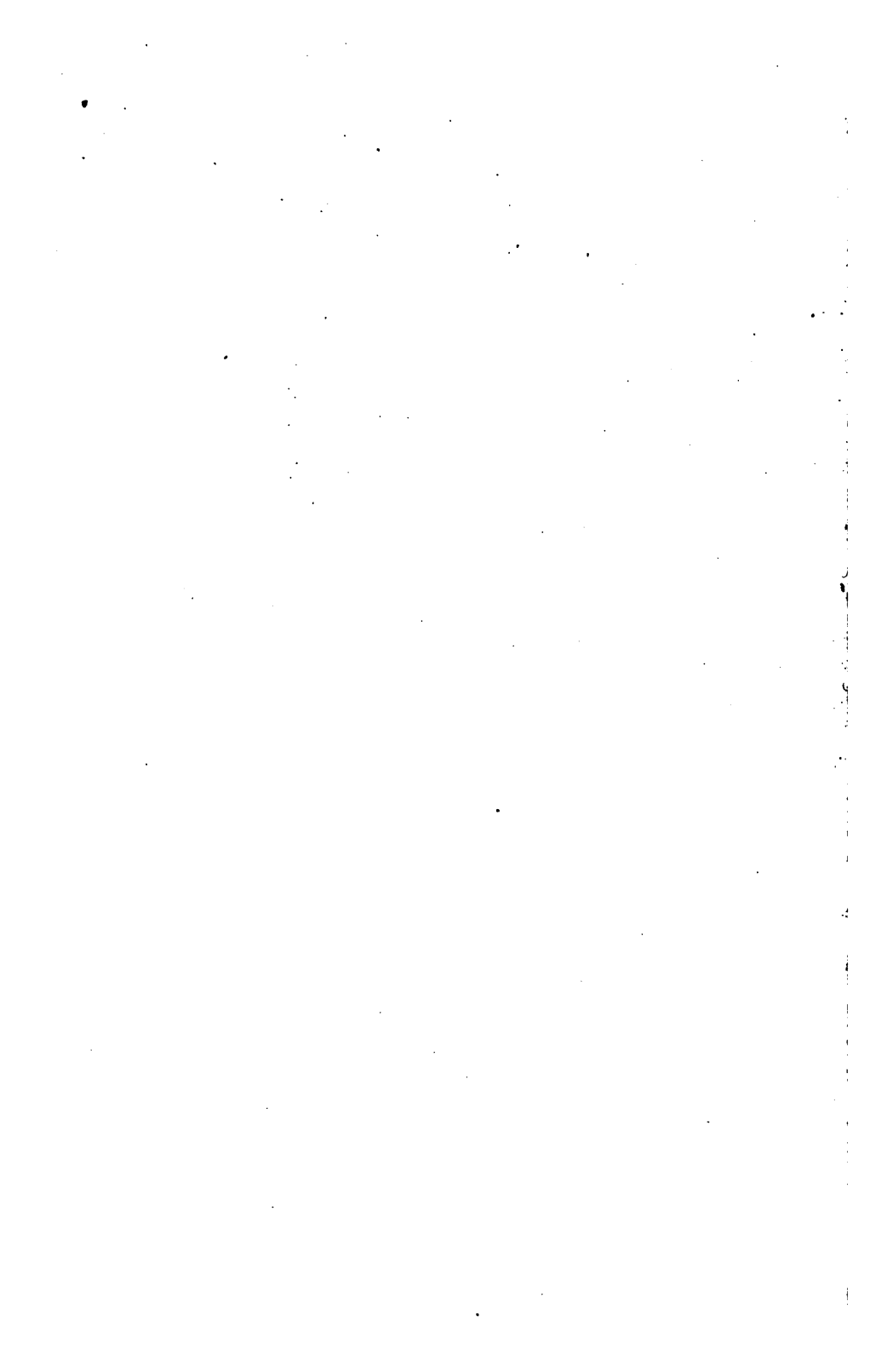
THAT the Ministers of the blessed Jesus may advance the glorious design of their divine mission, it is highly necessary, that they cultivate Christian love and unity ;—that they live in fellowship with one other, and with the whole household of faith ; that thus they may strengthen each other's hands, and encourage each other's hearts, and do honor to their Divine Master. As a testimony of their Christian fellowship, the scriptural practice of giving the right hand, hath ever been observed at solemnities like the present—a practice in its own nature of friendly import, and expressive of the greatest cordiality and affection. Therefore, in compliance with the desire of the Ordaining Council, I now welcome this our Brother into the vineyard of Christ. Reverend Sir, *Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart ? If so, give me thine hand.* By this token, we receive you into the chariot of the gospel ministry ; and certify our cordial approbation of you, as a fellow laborer in the vineyard of our great Lord.—We assure you of our readiness to assist you, and to be assisted by you in our common employment. We commit and commend you, dear brother, with the Church over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer, to the allwise care and protection of the great head of the Church. We pray that you may be strong in the grace, that is in Christ Jesus ; that you may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, and abundantly successful, that when your faithful labors shall terminate on earth, you may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

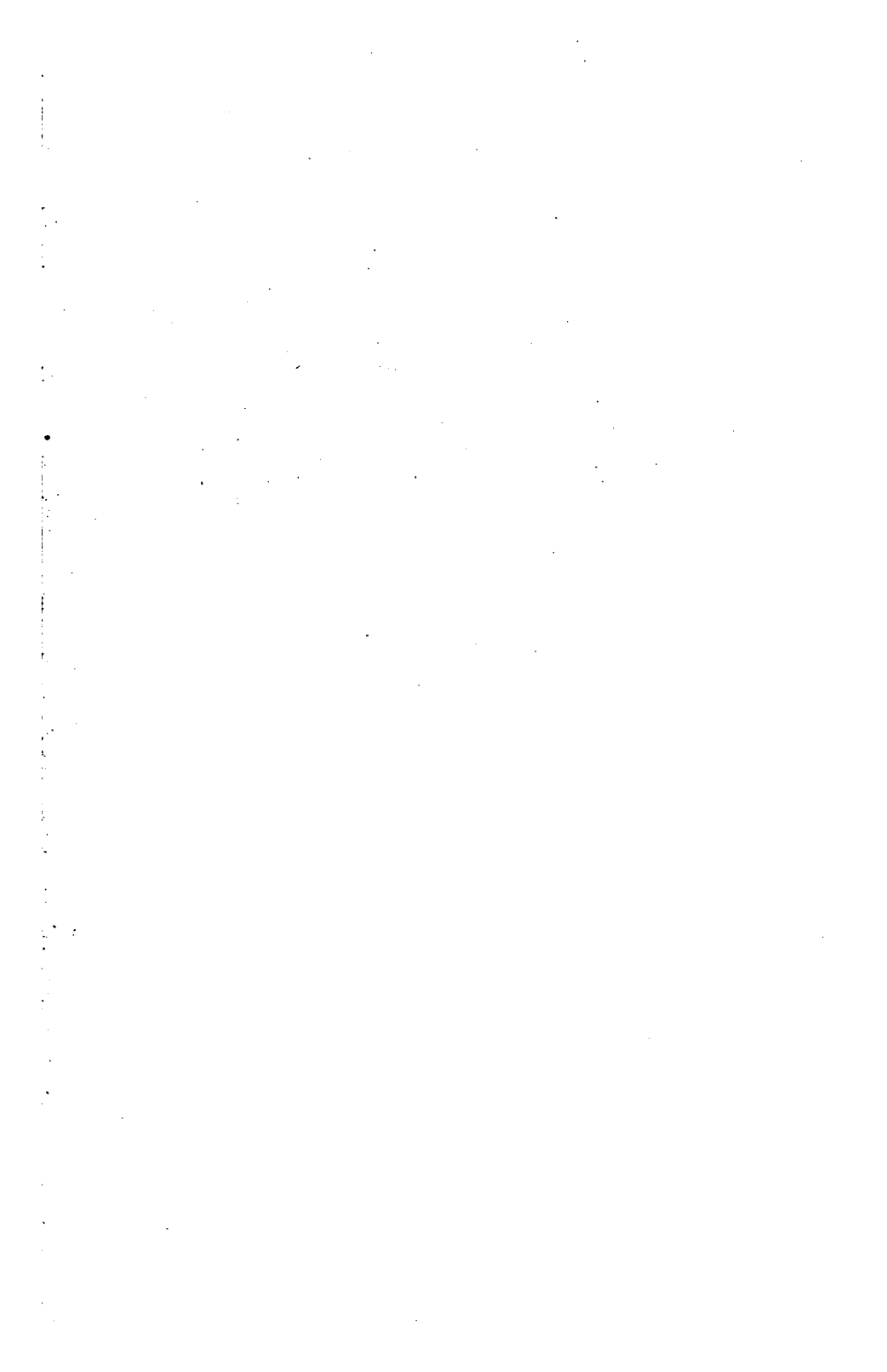
WE rejoice with you, brethren of this Church, in the blessings of this auspicious day. Rejoice in this man of God, whom you have chosen, and who has

him highly in love, for his work's sake.—Assist, encourage, and strengthen him in the important duties of his office.—Under his faithful ministry, may your souls prosper and be in health.—May you be fed with spiritual knowledge and understanding.—May the household of God grow in purity and holiness.—May sinners be awakened, convinced, and converted to the Christian faith and practice. And at last, *may you all come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels : to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.*









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